Dear mouse friends, Welcome to the world of



Geronimo Stilton







Geronimo Stilton
A learned and brainy
mouse; editor of
The Rodent's Gazette

Thea Stilton
Geronimo's sister and
special correspondent at
The Rodent's Gazette







Trap Stilton

An awful joker:

Geronimo's cousin and

owner of the store Cheap Junk for Less

Benjamin Stilton A sweet and loving nine-year-old mouse; Geronimo's favorite nephew















Geronimo Stilton

SINGING SENSATION



Scholastic Inc.

New York Toronto London Auckland Sydney Mexico City New Delhi Hong Kong



THE FABUMOUSE MOZART!

It was a cold, rainy January night.

Lucky for me, I was warm and cozy inside my mouse hole. I was nestled in my favorite pawchair in front of a cheery fire.

"This is the life!" I squeaked, popping a *chocolate* cheese cupcake into my mouth and opening my book. I felt so relaxed. Everything was so peaceful. But then . . .

Rattle! Rattle!

The wind was rattling the windowpane right behind my chair!

I decided to play some soothing music.

Then I remembered I didn't have any music.

My cousin Trap had borrowed all of my

CDs for his cruise to the **Hamster**Islands.

That did it! I ran to my favorite music store. When I arrived, I waved hello to the shop owner, Wild Willy Whistlewhishers. I made a mouseline straight for the Classical Music Department. I flipped through Beethoven, Bach, and Chopin until, at last, I found what I was looking for: Mozart. Have



Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(1756 - 1791)

Mozart was born in Salzburg, Austria. At age five, he composed his first piece of music. By the time he was six, he was an excellent pianist and violinist. Mozart died at age thirty-five. In his short life, he composed operas, symphonies, concertos, and chamber music. He is still considered a musical genius today.



you ever listened to Mozart? His music is

The CD I wanted was in a rack next to a cello.

I walked around the cello and almost slipped on a banana peel.



Yikes! Who would leave a banana peel on the floor in a music store?

I began to flip through the CDs when someone stepped on my paw.

I looked around. No one was there.

I went back to the CDs.

Just then, someone pulled my fur.

I WHIRLED around. Again, there was no one in sight. Who was bothering me? I'm a nice mouse. I never do anything wrong. Well, except for that one time when I gave an old lady a stick of gum. How was I supposed to know she had dentures? The gum ripped those fake teeth right out of her mouth!

I was thinking about teeth when someone vanked my tail.

"Yooo-hoo!" a familiar voice called out.

A gray mouse wearing a long trench coat popped out from behind the cello.



It was my old friend, the famouse detective Hercule Poirat. Hercule loves to play pranks.

"Did you like my little joke, Geronimo?" Hercule giggled.

Then he got serious. "I need your help," he said. "You see, I found some stolen CDs and —"

"Sorry, got to run!" I squeaked, cutting off my friend. I love Hercule, but he always gets me involved in the **LPGJIES**, cases, and I had *too much work* to do.

I paid for my CD and **RACED OUT THE DOOR**. Hercule called after me, but I wasn't listening. The only rodent I

wanted to listen to tonight was the fabumouse Mozart!





Mouse Island Idol

The next day, I got up early, gobbled down three large cheese doughnuts, and scampered to the office.

I had Go MUCE work to do. I had contracts to sign, articles to read, and bills to pay. Plus, I had to read through the entire edition of *The Rodent's Gazette* before it was printed. Just thinking about ALL of the work I had to do made my head spin. Oh, why was I always so stressed out? I felt a full-blown panic attack about to hit me.

Then the phone Pang.

I jumped so high, my head left a dent in the ceiling. Well, OK, maybe not a *real* dent, but you get the picture.





"Hello, this is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton!"

I squeaked into the phone.

"Hey, Mr. G!" a familiar rodent yelled. "What's happening? Are you still lifting those weights? Have you cut down on the disgusting doughnuts?"

I gulped, patting my tummy.

There is only one rodent I know who loves exercise more than cheese doughnuts. It was my super-fit, super-healthy, super-energetic friend CHAMP STRONGPAWS. Champ loves all

kinds of endurance sports like

cycling, swimming, and running. But most of all he **loves** marathons.

> Not too long ago he even signed me up to run in the Mouse Island Marathon. On

race day, I was so scared, I almost passed out before I even reached the starting line! Did I mention I'm not much of a **sportsmouse**? In fact, my sister, Thea, likes to say I have four left paws.

"Hi, Champ," I squeaked Nervously. I prayed he hadn't signed me up for another Crazy race.

But Champ didn't call to talk about marathons. It was worse. Much worse.

"You take showers, right, Mr. G?" Champ asked. "Of course I do!" I replied indignantly. I took pride in being a well-dressed, clean-smelling, very **NEAT** rodent.

"And you sing in the shower, don't you?" he asked. I felt my cheeks heat up. How did Champ know I sang in the shower? How embarrassing!

"How do you know that?" I asked.



"Well, Mr. G, I was walking by your house the other day and I heard you singing in the SHOWER. That's when I came up with a great PEA! I'm signing you up to be on





You've Got to Be Joking!

My fur stood on end. Have you ever seen Mouse Island Idol? It is a TV show where mice with amazing singing voices compete to become Mouse Island's best squeaker.

"You've got to be **joking!**" I shrieked into the phone. "I can't sing on TV!"

"I'm telling you, Mr. G, you've got real talent," Champ insisted. "Now here's what I need you to do. Start gargling with warm water to get your vocal cords going, do three hundred jumping jacks to get your blood pumping, and 1'11 be right over."

My jaw hit the ground. "What?!" I protested. "We can't get together now! I've got a ton of work to do."

CHAMP STRONGPAWS

First Name: Champ

Last Name: Strongpaws



Background info: An all-around star athlete. He's into the latest training trends. He works for a sports radio station, and loves to get lazy rodents up and running.

Sports: He does all kinds of endurance sports like cycling, running, and swimming. And he loves marathons!

His advice: Eat right, sleep right, and keep those paws pumping!

What he believes in: Exercise!

His passion: Exploring new countries and getting to experience other cultures.

His slogan: "Sports can make the world a better place!"

His claim to fame: He built a super-fast bicycle that can seat five mice!

His dream: To explore the ten most beautiful countries in the world in ten days, with ten different bicycles.

A loud buzzing sound interrupted me.

It was coming from the phone. Yes, my crazy friend had hung up on me!

Two minutes later, I glanced out of the window. Alarmed, I saw a **DIZAPPE** rodent arriving at warp speed on a bicycle. He was wearing a helmet, a yellow cyclist suit, and mirrored sunglasses. His head was bent so low, he looked like he was trying to eat the handlebars. He disappeared into the building, still on his bike. A second later, my door flew open. Champ **ZOOMED** into the room and skidded to a spectacular stop in front of my desk. He didn't dismount. Instead, he grabbed my paw and squeezed it so hard, I thought I would faint.

"Sananananananan great to see you, Mr. G!" he exclaimed.



ARE YOU EXCITED?

While I checked my paw for broken bones, Champ started squeaking.

"So, are you excited about the TV show?" he asked with a chuckle. "Are your whiskers SHIVERING with anticipation? Don't stress a bit! We'll have the public eating out of our paws!"

The door flew open again, and Pinky Pick, my editorial assistant, scampered in.

"HEY, BOSS mouse!" she shrieked. "You didn't tell me you were going to be on TV! Who knew you could sing? You can barely whistle!"

I felt a **GIANT**, mouse-size **HEADACHE** coming on. "I am



heard a thump outside my door. I raced to open it and was hit with an

avalanche of rodents. Cheese niblets!

My entire staff was eavesdropping on me!

They all started squeaking at once.

"Nor. Stilten's going to be famouse!"

"Our boss, the next Mouse Island Idol!"

My whiskers whirled with **frustration**. How did I get myself into these situations? Finally, I couldn't take it anymore.

"ENOUGH!" I cried. "I am not going to be famouse! I am not going to be on TV!"

Dead silence fell on the entire place.

It was then that my little nephew Benjamin came in. He hugged me HAPPILY.

"Uncle Geronimo, are you really going to be on the show?" he asked. "I've always dreamed of going to see *Mouse Island Idol*. **UNCLE GERONIMO**, I'm so proud of you! May I come with you?"

My heart melted. What could I do? I can never say no to my dear nephew. He means the world to me.

"Yes, Benjamin. I'll go on the show," I agreed. "And you can 《開題證 me on!"





WHY DO I HAVE TO TAKE A COLD SHOWER?

The following morning, I was dreaming happily of warm cheddar melts and sandy beaches when the doorbell **rang**.

I sat bolt upright. According to my clock, it was five in the morning. Who would ring my doorbell at this **Whmousely** time of the morning? Was there a fire down at *The Rodent's Gazette*? Had my sister, Thea, crashed her motorcycle?

I scampered to the front door, my whiskers twitching **NERVOUSLY**.

But when I yanked open the door, all I saw was Champ perched on a bicycle.

"Wake up, Mr. G!" he squeaked in my

snout. "Today is your first day of training. From now on, you will wake up at five A.M., take a COLD SHOWER, and then head to voice lessons. At six A.M., you'll take a COLD SHOWER, then head to ballet lessons. At seven A.M., you'll take a COLD SHOWER, then head to ballroom dancing. At eight A.M., you'll take a COLD SHOWER, then head to piano lessons. At nine A.M., you'll take a COLD SHOWER, then —"

My head was spinning. I held up my paw to interrupt him. "Why do I have to take a COLD SHOWER?" I interrupted.

With a smile, Champ showered me with a bucket of icy, cold water.



Champ's smile widened.

"See how well you can scream? That's how

you make those vocal cords stronger! No need to thank me, Mr. G," Champ explained.



Thank him? I was so mad I could have strangled him with my bare paws. I chased after Champ, screaming my head off, "If I catch

you..."
"That's it,

Mr. G!" Champ cheered. "Keep screaming!"

Oh, how did I get myself into this mess?



Performing Arts School

Champ took me to the MOUSE ISLAND SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS. The students there were so talented. Plus, the classes were REALLY HARD. I wanted to quit. But then I remembered the promise I had made to my nephew Benjamin. I couldn't disappoint him.

So, for three whole months, I stuck to Champ's crazy schedule. I had some amazing teachers at school. They taught me to read music, to play an instrument, and to sing and dance.

It was exhausting, but I have to admit, it was also kind of fun.

Now if only I could get used to those **COLD**SHOWERS!







SQUEAK IT UP!

ONE DAY after My Lessons, Champ picked me up at the performing arts school.

"You're in for a big surprise, Mr. G!" he announced.

I gulped. Champ's surprises were usually my NIGHTMARES.

Champ drove like a wild mouse through the busy streets of New Mouse City. Along

the way, we nearly mowed down a mouse selling het cheesy pretzels, a delivery rodent, and a mother mouse pushing her baby mouseling in a stroller.

"Watch it!" they all cried.

By the time we got to our destination, my fur was standing on end. Champ dragged me into an **end.** Skyskaper. We got into an elevator with mirrored walls. Champ pushed a button, and we shot like a missile to the thirty-sixth floor.

"Welcome to Mousey Records," the receptionist greeted us. Holey cheese! I thought. Mousey Records is the most popular record label in New Mouse City!

We followed the receptionist down a long, carpeted hallway into a luxurious glass office. A serious-looking bunch of rodents stared at us from behind a huge table.

"So you're the new talent Champ has been telling us about," one of the mice said.

"Sing something," another instructed.

"Yeah, squeak it up," a third agreed.

I was so nervous, I thought I might faint. My teeth began chattering. My paws trembled. Everyone stared at me, waiting.

"Well, um, I . . ." I stammered. Just then, a terrible pain shot up my spine. I let out a screech.



I looked down. Champ was standing on my tail.

The record executives didn't seem to notice.

"Amazing!" they gushed. "You were right, Champ. We'll have him record a CD and we'll send it to Mouse Island Idol."

The biggest mouse picked up the phone.

"I'll ask the president of **Mousey Records** if he agrees."

He spoke on the phone for a few seconds, then hung up the receiver looking very pleased.

"The president said he heard that YELL all the way up on the forty-sixth floor! It's a go!"

I could hardly believe it. It felt like one minute I was singing in the shower, and the next I was cutting a CD for Mousey Records!



In the recording studio, lots of rodents work together to make the record a success:



THE PRESIDENT!



The director of

marketing, who



The publisher, who follows its production to the end!

The lawyer, who deals with legal questions!





The store owners. who sell the CDs!











The distributors who make sure the CDs arrive in every store!



Welcome to New Mouse City!

The record executives introduced me to a songwriter. He said he had just written a song that was perfect for me: "Welcome to New Mouse City." I felt so honored. I felt so special. I felt so ... nervous! How could I, Geronimo Stilton, sing such an impertant seng?

Champ shoved a guitar in my paws. I gulped. **Stars** appeared before my eyes. Then another picture popped into my head. It was of my dear nephew **Benjamin**. What could I do? I had to sing. So I did.















Welcome to New Mouse City

Welcome to New Mouse City, where the streets are, oh, so pretty, and the mice are so nice, you'll come back at least twice to the fabumouse New Mouse City!

If you're looking to eat,

you are in for a treat. New Mouse City is known for its cheeses. There are tasty buffets and cheddar cafés and waterfront dining with breezes.

If you prefer to shop,
New Mouse City's your stop.
You can buy almost anything here:
tail combs, fancy ties, whisker curlers, and pies.
You can even get rock-climbing gear.

Yes, welcome to New Mouse City, where the streets are, oh, so pretty, and the mice are so nice, you'll come back at least twice to the fabumouse New Mouse City!

At night, the lights of the city shine bright. All rodents are charmed by the magical sight. You can take in a show or hit museum row. New Mouse City's a treasure wherever you go.

Yes, welcome to New Mouse City, where the streets are, oh, so pretty, and the mice are so nice, you'll come back at least twice to the fabumouse New Mouse City!

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When I was done singing, everyone at **Mousey Records** cheered. But then, I noticed Champ and some of the record executives all huddled in a corner. They kept staring at me and whispering.

I started to get worried.

What was wrong? Was my singing too loud? Too soft? Too high? Too Low? Or could it possibly be too . . . Squeaky? Yes, I decided that must be it.

I hung my head. My tail drooped. Now Benjamin would never get to see me on TV.



Too squeaky, I thought, then sighed. I felt lower than a sewer rat. But then I started to feel annoyed. Of course my voice sounded squeaky. After all, I was a mouse, wasn't I? Mice are supposed to sound squeaky.

I marched up to Champ and his new pals. But before I could say a word, Champ pulled me aside.

"Mr. G, we've decided you need someone to help you with your Look," he said.

"And I have the perfect rodent."

At first, I was insulted. I mean, what was wrong with my LOOK? I take a shower every day. I DRUSE my fur. And I always floss after a big meal. Then I thought about my wardrobe. It wasn't exactly exciting.

"I guess it would be fun to have someone help me pick out some new clothes," I agreed. "He's an expect, right?" At this, Champ gave me a sly look.

"She's an expert," he grinned.

"She?" I asked. "It's a female mouse?" Champ gave me another look.

"Yes, she's a **very young** young female mouse," he said. "In fact, you know her well. She works for you."

Suddenly, I had a terrible feeling in the pit of my stomach.



There is only one very young female mouse at The Rodent's Gazette.

"Not Pinky Pick!" I screeched. Pinky is my extremely brainy but extremely annoying editorial assistant.

"She's the one!" Champ squeaked as he jumped on his bike and raced for the door.

I tried to run after him, but he was too FAST

Over the next several days, Pinky got me to







ELVIS PRESLEY









EMO

9

FOLK





But, in the end, I decided to stick with my own look and just be myself.





No More Cheesy Chews for You!

The next day, I was sitting in my office munching on a **gummy** chocolate cheese doughnut when my door flew open. Can you guess who it was? Yes, it was Champ.

He ran up to me and **ripped** the doughnut out of my paw.

"What do you think you're doing, Mr. G?" he squeaked. "You can't be eating junk like this if you want to make it on Mouse Island Ido!! You need to start eating right!"

"But . . . but . . . " I stammered. Champ interrupted me.

"No 'buts,' Mr. G," he ordered. (
"From now on, I'm putting you on a STRUCT DUET. You will

eat only MEALTHY FOODS like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains."

He plunked a big basket filled with nutritious foods on my desk.

Then I listened halfheartedly as Champ read off a list of foods I couldn't eat.

"No cardy, no cakes, no cookies, no fried foods ..."

His voice droned on and on. I kept thinking of the delicious box of Cheesy Chews I had at home in my fridge. Good thing I hadn't brought it to work. Champ would have tossed it with my doughnut!

"Oh, and one more thing," Champ added before he raced out the door. "I climbed through the window of your mouse hole and cleaned out your whole place. No MORE CHEESY CHEWS for you, Mr. G!"





A week later, my doorbell rang at four A.M. Ding-dong! Ding-dong! Ding-dong!

I dragged myself out of bed. Who was waking me up so early? I yanked open my door and almost got run over by Champ on his bicycle. I should have known.

"This is it, Mr. G," Champ announced. "Tonight is the big night. You are scheduled to appear on *Mouse Island Idol*!"

My PAWS started to tremble. My fur stood on end. "Tonight?!" I shrieked. "But I'm not ready!" I was a nervous wreck!

Champ clapped me on the back.

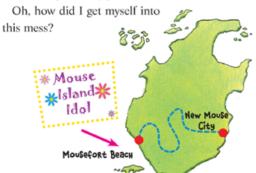
"Of course you're ready, Mr. G," he said confidently. "All you need to do is warm up your voice, and you're good to go! Just pack up your suit, change into these bike shorts, and we're off!"

Bike shorts?

The TV studio where they filmed Mouse Island Idol was all the way in Mousefort Beach. That was more than 150 miles away! I'd never make it there on a bike.

"But what about the train?" I protested.

Champ rolled his eyes. "Let's go, Mr. G," he said, rolling over my paw and out the door.





By the time we arrived, I was so tired, I could barely keep my **EYES** open. Champ, on the other paw, was full of energy. He zipped off to register me.

I was relieved. Now was my chance to catch a quick **ratnap**. I curled up on the sidewalk and fell asleep. I dreamed I was riding my bike through the Mousehara Desert. It was boiling #107. Suddenly, I spotted a lake in the distance. I pedaled toward the lake, but my bike hit a rock. I went flying over the handlebars and landed in a pile of MOUSETRAPS.

YOUUUUUUCH

I screamed so loud, I woke myself up.

Champ was standing over me. No, he was standing *on* me. On my **PAW**, to be exact!

"Nice squeaking, Mr. G!" he smirked.

But there was no time to get

UPSEL. I was about to sing on
national TV! Champ said there
were four other contestants before me. Each
would sing a song, and then he or she would
be judged by a panel of celebrity rodents.

Just thinking about being onstage made my whiskers tremble.

Oh, how did I get myself into such a mess? I wasn't a singer. I was about to grab my tail and run when I felt a tug on my paw.

I looked down. It was my **dear** nephew Benjamin. "Isn't this **BXSITIMG**, Uncle Geronimo?" he breathed. "I can't believe I'm going to watch my favorite uncle on my favorite TV show — **Mouse Island Ido!**!"



Don't Think About It!

I felt better knowing that Benjamin would be cheering me on. Still, I had bufferflies in my stomach. And my paws were shaking so hard, I almost tripped on our way into the studio.

Get a grip, Geronimo, I coached myself. All you have to do is sing one song. How BAD can you be? After all, you've been practicing every day for three months. And even if you're the worst squeaker, at least you'll show Benjamin you're not a quitter.

We gathered backstage so that I could wait for my turn. I listened to the other singers. They were **good**, but I told myself that I was good, too. I started to feel **DITTER**.

Then Champ put his paw around me.

"Relax, Mr. G," he advised. "You'll be great. Don't think about the HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS of rodents watching you from around the world. Don't think about the eggs they'll hurl at you if you stink!" I gulped.

"Don't think about tripping onstage. Don't think about forgetting the words to the song," Champ went on.

I shivered. By now, the gentle butterflies in my stomach had turned into an angry MOB.

"And definitely don't think about getting

a tongue cramp. That would be the worst,"
Champ continued.

I wanted to **SCYEAM**.

I wanted to **Cry**. I wanted to put a sock in Champ's



snout. But he kept right on squeaking.

> The more I tried not to think of things, the more I thought of them!

We entered the **THEATER** where the **festival** was being held.

CHAMP

grabbed me by the tail. I didn't even realize that he had pushed me. I only knew that all of a sudden I was on the stage of the festival. I saw **Rattisio**, the most famous master of ceremonies on Mouse Island.

I was overwhelmed by emotion just to be here with him!

"Good evening, everyone!" he squeaked confidently. "Ladies and gentlemice, I give you a new artist who is participating in the festival for the first time! Geronimo Stilton, who will sing 'Welcome to New Mouse City'!"

He winked an eye and whispered, "Cheer up, and good luck!"

He adjusted the microphone in front of my snout and disappeared!

I Was the only one onstage, now, it was My turn.

Cheese niblets!



Holey cheese! The place was packed. The audience stared up at me expectantly.

The **STAGE LIGHTS** grew brighter. They were so bright, I couldn't see a thing!

I swallowed hard. For some reason, my tongue felt huge in my **mouth**. But I had to

sing. Everyone was waiting

for me. I took a **deep**breath and opened
my mouth, but nothing
came out. Not even one
little squeak.

Rat-munching rattlesnakes! Could this really be happening?

Could I really have gotten a cramp in my tongue?

No, it couldn't be. I took another breath and tried again. Still nothing came out. I was horrified.

"Squeak it up! Squeak it up!" the crowd began to chant.

I didn't know what to do. I was frozen with FEAR. Just when I thought I would faint, Benjamin appeared at my side.

"Don't be nervous, Uncle," he said. "I know

you can do it. You just have to **believe** in yourself."







I was so touched. Before I knew it, I was **SINGING** out loud and clear along with him.

All of the young mouselings in the audience joined in. Our song filled the studio. I'm not sure what the judges thought, but it sounded fabumouse to me!



WHY ME?

When we finished singing, a hush fell over the audience.

I was worried

Moldy mozzarella, did I sound that bad? I thought.

Then thunderous applause erupted.

The judges declared me the winner. I, Geronimo Stilton, was the new Mouse Island Ido! What an honor!

I invited my friends at Mousey



Records onstage. After all, I couldn't have done it without them.

Champ shook my paw.

"
REBAT JOB, Mr. G!" he shouted. "I almost thought you believed my tongue-cramp story. But you knew I was joking, right? I mean, only a furbrain would believe you can get a cramp in your tongue," he chuckled.

I felt the **BLOOD** rushing to my face. Then I felt a searing pain as Champ rolled off with my tail caught in his bicycle spokes!

I let out a whisker-curling yell. "SQUEAK!"

The crowd went wild.

"What a voice!" they cheered.

It took three rolls of tape to bandage my tail.

ail.

"WHY. WHY. WHY DID I LET MYSELF

BE DRAGGED INTO SUCH A MESS?"

THAT'S STEALING!

In three weeks, I had become a singing sensation! "Welcome to New Mouse City" was put on a CD. Mice everywhere were listening to my

song—in the subway, in the park, and even at the supermarket!

Then one day, Champ called. "Something weird is going on," he said. "Mousey Records says they've hardly sold any of your CDs.

your record!"

I had no idea what Champ was talking about. Tons of rodents were playing my CD. Mousey Records had to be selling copies. And what did **PIRATES** have to do with anything?

Champ explained what it meant to pirate a CD. First the thief buys a CD from a store. Then he makes a lot of copies, sells them, and keeps all the money.

"That's STEALING!" I cried.

There was only one thing to do.

"This is a case for **HERCULE POIRAT!**"





A TOTAL RATTRAP!

I took off for Hercule's agency. Oh, excuse me. Do you remember Hercule Poirat from the beginning of this story? He is not only my friend; he is also the world's most famouse mouse detective!

Even though Hercule is famouse, his office is a complete disaster. It is located in a Rundown building sandwiched between two sleek skyscrapers. Hercule's office is such a mess, some clients refuse to meet him there. They will only do business over the phone. But Hercule doesn't care.

"I love my messy office," he always

says. "It reminds me of my home sweet home."

Hercule was right about that. His home was a total rattrap!

I knocked on the door.



Just then, a sticky red liquid rained down on my head.

Was it blood?

I was about to faint when the door opened.

"Is that you, Geronimo?" Hercule giggled when he saw me. "What do you think

> of my new antiburglar device? Don't look so upset. It's just ketchup."

He gave me a towel and I did my best to wipe the sticky stuff off me. Oh, why had





I bothered to take a shower that morning? I felt worse than the time I accidentally fell into a vat of macarona and chaese at the Cheese Place Factory. I was sticky then, too, but at least I was covered in yummy cheese!

I took two pawsteps into Hercule's office.
What a disaster!

There was **TUNK** everywhere! Books, **CRUMPLED** papers, dirty dishes, and old **bandance** peels covered the floor. I saw a patched-up old chair in one corner of the room and a piece of **moldy** pizza on the desk. It really was disgusting. But I didn't bother mentioning it to Hercule.

He was a slob and he was proud of it. Plus, I had more important things to discuss.

I told Hercule that my CD had been pirated. "Will you help me?" I asked.

A CROOK IN A CAMPER

Hercule stamped his paw, sending up a cloud of dust. "I told you someone was stealing CDs!" he squeaked. "Remember when I asked for your help on this case?"

Somewhere in the back of my brain, I did remember. I apologized to Hercule.

Then I asked, "What do we do now?"

"I've got it all under CONTROL, Geronimo," Hercule answered. "Come back tonight, and we'll sniff out this case together."

Later that evening, I scampered back to Hercule's office. I knocked on the door.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK!

A sack of flour bonked me on the head. I was covered from head to tail in white powder.



"WHY ME?!" I shrieked.

Hercule appeared at the door. "How do you like the flour, Geronimo?" he asked.

"I ran out of ketchup."

I dusted myself off.

Then I went in.

"I was just making a become shake," Hercule said, hitting a button on the blender. "Want some?"

I shook my head. I know they're healthy, but I can't stand bananas. When the drink was ready, Hercule slurped it down in one Surp!

gulp. Then he let out a loud burp.

I made a mental note to return the magnifying glass



I had bought my friend for Christmas. I'd use the money to buy him a subscription to Gentlemouse Weekly instead!

I was still thinking about *Gentlemouse* Weekly when Hercule's phone rang.

"I've got some exciting news, Geronimo," Hercule announced after he hung up. "The police need me to track down a mysterious black camper. It belongs to a thief whose nickname is the Musical Pirate."

According to the police, the **Musical Pirate** was stealing CDs and making copies of them. Then he passed them off to a rat named **Sleezer**, who sold them to the innocent mice of New Mouse City.

Now I knew who had stolen my CD. But there was still one problem.

How po you catch a crook in a camper?



I should have known Hercule already had a plan. That night at midnight, we scampered down to the waterfront. According to Hercule, the **Musical Pirate** was due to meet Sleezer's henchmice at **Pirate**.

It was cold, dark, and spooky at the pier. To make matters worse, Hercule had insisted we



disguise ourselves as fishermice.

Before I could say "squeak!" he had sprayed me with a gallon of fish oil.

stunk like a rotten fish market on a hot summer day

Hours went by with no action. Then, we heard a strange **SOUND**, like a cat hissing.

HISSSSSSS!

The fur on my tail stood on edge, and my whishers trembled. I saw a black camper with what appeared to be cat's ears on top.

Then I read the name under the front windshield: Cruelcat Express.





The camper was incredibly long, with no windows. What a

Did I mention I'm afraid of windowless places?

The camper parked along the pier.

An invisible door opened with a swish. A cat whose fur was as dark as a

stepped out. He wore a sleek black raincoat with the initials **P.P.** on it, and steel-toed boots. His eyes were two slits of icy blue, and a long scar slashed his left cheek.

CatBerry

The strange electronic gadget P. P. always wears around his neck.

It can be used to make phone calls, send e-mails, play music, and activate an alarm. Around his neck, he wore a strange electronic gadget. When he tapped it, I gasped. He had a STEEL PAW!

I was thinking of how much he reminded me of a PIRATE when the headlights of the camper flickered. A trapdoor opened in the back, and cases of something began to roll out. It didn't take us long to realize they were filled with pirated CDs!

Sleezer's henchmice loaded the boxes into a van. So this was how my song had been stolen!





When the van was fully loaded, the crooked mice **TOOK OFF**. Only the black camper and the mysterious pirate remained. He stared out over the water. Then he unwrapped a piece of **black** gum and began chomping on it noisily. After a few minutes, he slipped back into the camper. But first, he spat the gum out and threw the wrapper into the ocean. What a littercat!

I WAS SO DISGUSTED.

"That's it," I told Hercule. "I've seen enough. Let's go home."

Of course, Hercule had other ideas. "ARE YOU CRAZY, GERONIMO?!" he squeaked.

"Now is our time to do some real **SPYING**.

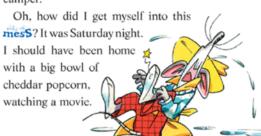
I'll stand guard while you go check out the Cruelcat Express."

I tried to refuse. I mean, Hercule was the detective, right? Plus, it's no secret that I'm a bit of a Scaredy mouse. Well, OK, I'm actually a scaredy mouse, but no one has to know that.

Finally, I gave in.

"I'd go myself, but I have a **blister** on my left paw," Hercule said as he shoved me toward the camper.

His voice trailed off as I crept closer to the camper.



Or maybe playing a game at my favorite bowling alley, **Lucky Paw Lanes**.

At that moment, the driver's door of the Cruelcat Express opened, and two muscular-looking cats came out.

I flattened myself against the side of the camper.

Luckily, the two thugs didn't even glance my way.

"That was a great idea the boss had to copy those CDs inside the camper, right, Ding-Dong?" one cat chuckled.

"You said it, Ding-a-Ling," the other guffawed. "Guess he'll be using the money to do more WICKED THINGS on Cat Island."





PEE PEE!

I crept back to Hercule.

"Those crooks are from Cat Island!" I

My paws trembled as I dialed Champ on my cell phone. I had to tell him we had found the **Musical Pirate**.

But just as I was starting to explain about the Cruelcat Express, and the pirate with the steel paw, something terrible happened.

My cell phone was tossed into the water.

I wish I could say it slipped out of my paws, but it was worse. Much worse.

We had been discovered!

I stared helplessly into the icy cold eyes of the mysterious Musical Pirate.



"What do you think you **rodents** are doing?!" he **growled**. "How dare you **SPY** on the great, the cunning, and, might I add, the purricetly handsome **Pussycat Pulverizer**, also known as **P.P.** for short?"

To my horror, at that moment, Hercule collapsed in a fit of **laughter**.

"Excuse me, did you say your name was Pee Pee?" he asked with a laugh.

S in, where is the potty? I have to go Age pee?

Pussycat Pulverizer looked like he was about to explode. STEAM shot from his ears.

"They're my initials, FOOL!" he hissed.

Hercule just smirked. "Whatever you say, Pee Pee," he said.

P.P. appeared to be growing angrier by the minute. I had to do something.

"Um, Mr. P.P., sir, we are just poor fishermice passing through," I said meekly as I tried to scoot away from him. "We'll get out of your fur now."

P.P. wrinkled his nose.

"You do stink like fish, but I say you're spies!" he roared.

He grabbed his Catherry.

"BE READY TO LEAVE IN AN HOUR!" he yelled into the device.

Just then, a cat with white fur and a black spot around his eye began to whine.

"But, Cousin, we just got here," he mewed. "I wanted to get a mug of fresh milk and a plate of sardines at



the Ratsnest Diner. I heard they serve cats."

P.P. rolled his eyes.

"Forget it, Cleveland," he hissed.

Cleveland stamped his paws. "No fair! I **never** get to do anything fun!" he started to whine. Then he stopped.

P.P. was glaring at him with a **DEADLY** look in his eyes.

"Oops, did I say that? Sometimes my words get so m-m-m-mixed up," Cleveland stammered. "I always have fun when I'm around you, C-C-C-Cousin. Better get packing. Hey, maybe I can whip up a **black**

eel pie for dinner and some of that fancy black licorice you like so much."

As Cleveland slunk away, a tall cat with STEEL-STUDDED bracelets on each paw



Who is he? A mean, nasty cat who travels around in a long black camper called the Cruelcat Express.

Nickname: The Musical Pirate

What does he do? He makes copies of stolen CDs in his high-tech camper. He never stays in the same place, so it's difficult for the authorities to catch him.

Unusual markings: His right paw is made out of steel.

His battle cry: "We are ca-ca-cats and we eat ra-ra-rats!"

His plan: To sell thousands of pirated CDs so he can become rich, rich, rich!

His weakness: Black licorice chewing gum

His dream: To become the most powerful cat on Cat Island.



strode over to us. His name was **PUNY**, but he was as big as my uncle Bigbelly's industrial-size

refrigerator!

Puny took everything we had in our pockets.

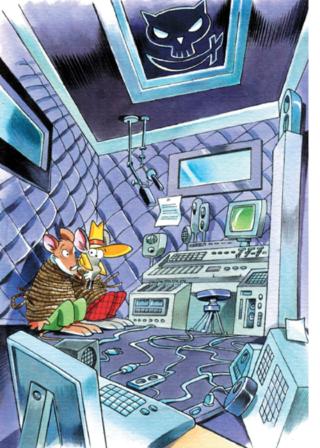
Then he turned toward **P.P.**

"What should we do with these **good-for-nothing** rodents, Boss?" he asked.

A few minutes later, Hercule and I found ourselves tied up in a room with lots of recording equipment.

"This place has soundproof walls, so don't even bother **SCREAMING**," Puny advised before he left.

Oh, how did I get myself into SUCH 3 Mess?





Garlic Mouse Roast

"Putrid cheese puffs!" Hercule complained.
"I wish they hadn't emptied our pockets. I

had some of my best gadgets with me. Like my super-duper

cheese slicer and pocketknife.

And my ultra-cool laser-beam

ballpoint pen. And my Compact pawnail

super-duper cheese slicer and pocketknife



filer. This stinks! What if I get a **HANGNAIL**?"

For a while, we both stared into space, not saying a word. I think we were both too down in the dumps to squeak.

Then Hercule started to giggle



uncontrollably. At first, I was alarmed. Was he having a medical **EMERGENCY**? Did he need a psychiatrist? Was he that worried about his missing pawnail filer?

Fortunately, it was none of those things. battle cry, "Have NO fear, Hercule Poir Next he gnawed at our ropes liberat. escape plan.

rat.

In a few minutes, we were free!

Hercule hid behind the door. Then I velled through the door.

"Excuse me, Mr. PUNY," I called. "Can you come here for a minute?"

I heard some shuffling outside the door.

"Oh, why'd you wake me up?" PUNY grumbled. "I was dreaming I was eating a juicy garlic mouse roast. It was so tasty."

PUNY pulled open the door, and as he did, Hercule clobbered him on the head with a **HEAVY** speaker.

The humongous cat went down like a ton of hard cheese.





"Let's go!" Hercule whispered.

We tiptoed around **PUNY** and found ourselves in a long hallway covered with **black** velvet wallpaper. My teeth chattered. What a dark and **SP00KY** place!

I shivered. We were in **P.P.**'s private apartment!

I was so **SCARED**, I felt like I could jump out of my own fur. I tried not to scream as we passed an aquarium filled with **piranhas**.

Then something caught my eye that made my heart stop. A cat in a black raincoat sat hunched over a computer screen. Yep, it was **Pussycat Pulverizer** himself! He

was staring at a string of numbers that were flashing across the monitor.

"I'm rich, rich, [2] "I' he meowed. "I've made more money selling these pirated CDs than I've made in my whole nine lives!"



He picked up his **CatBerry**, chuckling wickedly.

"We leave for Cat Island in an hour!" he announced. "Get packing!"

I was ready to pack it up myself when the worst thing happened.

P.P. turned and spotted us.

"Catch them!" he shrieked.

Just then, I heard a familiar voice shouting outside.

"Give yourselves up!" the voice bellowed.

"You're surrounded!"

It was CHAMP Strongpaws!

With a cry, P.P. began shricking into his CatBerry, "Attention, all felines on the CRUELCAT EXPRESS! This is an EMERGENCY! I repeat, EMERGENCY! Everyone to the submarine! Now!"



A Mysterious SUBMARINE

There was no time to waste. We had to get out of that camper or we'd be mouse roasts for sure!

At last, we made it to the door and **酸眼像質** outside.



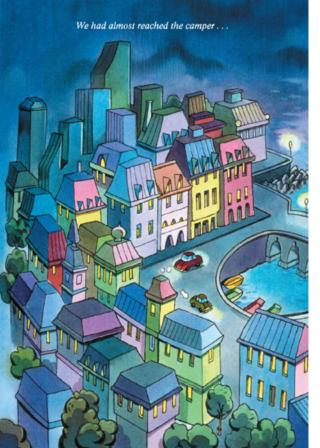


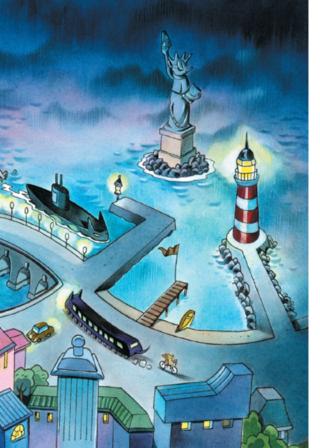
I was so exhausted. I collapsed on the ground. **Big mistake!** Seconds later, a super-fit mouse on a bicycle built for three skidded to a stop inches from my snout. Can you guess who it was? It was Champ Strongpaws, of course!

"Hop on!" he squeaked. "We've got to

We jumped on the bike, and the three of us began to pedal **frantically**.

Sweat sprang from my fur. Did I mention I'm not much of a sportsmouse?





We had almost reached the camper when we saw something BLACK and SHINY in the water. Was it a shark? Was it the **Loch Ness Mousester**?

No, it was a **black submarine** with the same inscription as the black camper: Cruelcat Express.

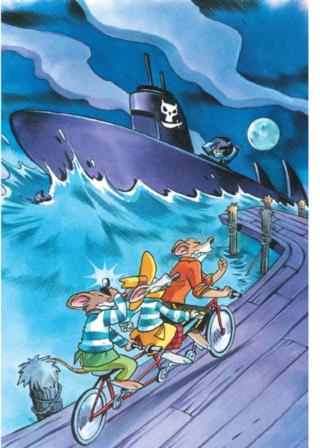
A large door opened on the sub.

Then the camper disappeared inside.

P.P. let out an **EVIL LAUGH** as the submarine took off into the night.

I was glad I had my camera on me. A cat with a STEEL PAW riding on a submarine?

YOU HAD TO SEE IN TO BELIEVE THE





Soon the submarine sank into the churning waves and disappeared from sight. I stared out over the dark ocean, deep in thought. Even though the cats had gone, I was still worried. I wondered if and when P.P. would come back. I wondered what evil plans he was cooking up on Cat ISLAND. I wondered if he was cooking up mice.

Suddenly, I began to feel sick to my stomach. Maybe, it was the cycling. Maybe it was the stinky **fish oil** in my fur. But whatever it was, there was one thing I knew for sure. It was time to go home.

"Let's go!" I told my friends.

We rode back through the streets of New Mouse City. At that moment, I saw some newspapers **fluttering** by in the breeze.

I had a brilliant idea. If
I hurried, I could publish
a SPECIAL EDITION of

The Rodent's Gazette. It would be fabumouse!





STOP THE PRESSES!

My friends dropped me off at *The Rodent's* Gazette.

I ran straight into the office.

"Stop the pressest" I squeaked at the top of my lungs. "We're going to do a SPECIAL EDITION of the Gazette. It's sensational news!"

I raced toward the pressroom with my staff following me down the hallway. My secretary, Mousella MacMouser, took notes as I explained my exciting adventure.



I told everyone about **Pussycat Pulverizer**'s plot to sell thousands of stolen CDs. I told them about his black camper and submarine, the Cruelcat Express, and about his whiny cousin Cleveland.

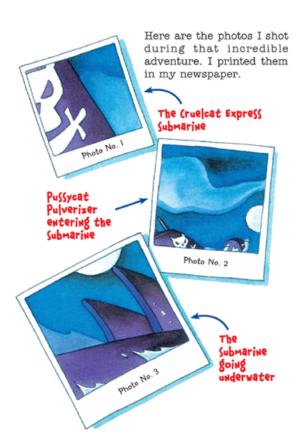
Then I showed everyone the PHOTOS

I had taken.

I couldn't take my eyes off one shot of P.P. racing for the submarine. I felt like he was **STARING** right at me!

Cheese niblets! I was glad we had escaped from such an EVIL cat!









The special edition was a **big success**. I was so happy. I even got a note from my impossibly **HARD-TO-PLEASE** grandfather William Shortpaws.

It read:

Nice going, Geronimal Now get back to work Grandfather William

I smiled. My grandfather William was one **TOUGH** mouse. You might even say he was as tough as a cat!



BANANA BONANZA BUFFET

The next night, Hercule had a party at his house. He invited Champ, me, and all of my friends from *The Rodent's Gazette*.

I put on my best jacket. I combed my fur until it **gleamed**. Then I added a spritz of cologne. I felt **金数** AT.

I arrived at Hercule's house right on time. But when I rang the bell, disaster struck. First globs of **honey** rained down on

my head. Then a fan blew a cloud of feathers at me. I looked like a mouse who had



been attacked by a gang of crazed chickens!

I **STOMPED** into Hercule's kitchen, showering the place with feathers. Oh, how did I get myself into such a mess?

At that moment, I noticed a STRANGE scent in the air.

"Uh, what did you make for dinner, Hercule?" I asked suspiciously.

Hercule grinned. "You're not going to believe this, Stilton.

"Tonight I have whipped up what I like



banana appetizers, banana soup, banana cheese loaf, and even

I clutched my stomach. Did I mention I hate bananas?

I was feeling worse than ever. My tail had stuck to the countertop. There was a feather in my nose. And I was starving.

In the other room, I could hear Hercule



greeting our friends. Everyone was laughing and talking as the house filled with guests.

I listened for a minute and then I made a decision.

I found a piece of stale bread and a **crust of blue cheese** in Hercule's refrigerator. Then I
took a shower, put on one of Hercule's robes,
and joined my friends.

After all, it's not the food that makes a perfect dinner party — it's the company of good friends!



Here are some jokes we heard at Hecule's dinner party.

Furbrain and his wife leave for vacation.

At the airport, Furbrain stamps his paw and says, "I should have brought the

piano!"
"What for?" asks his wife.
"Because I left the plane
tickets on it!"

"I was walking under a window when a radio fell on my head," Nibbles tells his friend.

"Holey cheese! Did you get hurt?" asks his friend. "No. Luckily, it was playing soft music!"

Mrs. Rat is singing loudly in the shower.

"What did you do with the money?" asks Mr. Rat. "What money?" replies Mrs. Rat.

"The money I gave you for singing lessons!"





RAT-MUNCHING RATTLESNAKES!

The following month, I was working quietly when I heard a **COMMOTION** outside my office.

A second later, my door burst open and Champ Strongpaws zoomed in. He was riding a bicycle built for two, which is also known as a tandem bicycle.

Before I could ask him why he was riding a bike with two seats, Champ rolled over my

tail and skidded to a stop.

"Rat-munching rattlesnakes!" I screeched, jumping to my paws.



Champ grinned. "Mr. G, you must be reading my mind!" he squeaked. "I was just thinking about snakes. In fact.

I came here to tell you about the exciting trip I have planned for us. Just imagine: a dry desert under the BLAZING sun, sand dunes as for as the eye

strange wild animals like POISONOUS snakes and

spiders as large as chickens!"

1 shivered. What was Champ talking about? A trip? For the two of us? It was then that I noticed the SLEEPING BAGS, TENTS, AND CANTEENS attached to Champ's bicycle.

can see, and

Oh, no! Not one of Champ's crazy bike races! I wasn't an athlete. Plus, I was way too busy at work.

In a daze, I listened as Champ went on about

ALL OF THE THINGS WE WOULD DO AND SEE. We would pedal for miles on end, drinking juice and frying

eggs by the HEAT of the blistering sun.

Whew! I felt tired just imagining it. Without thinking, I plopped down on the back of Champ's bicycle.

I heard a triumphant screech.

Then he began to pedal like a mad mouse.

"I knew you wouldn't miss this trip, Mr. G!" he cried.

"Adventure, here we come!



At first, I tried to stop him. Then I gave up and started to pedal.

Having a wild desert adventure might be sort of fun, after all. I mean, if a mouse like me could become a singing sensation, then I guess





ABOUT THE AUTHOR



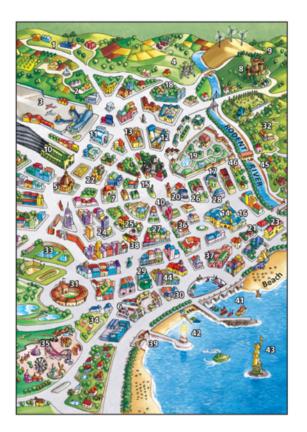
Born in New Mouse City, Mouse Island, GERONIMO STILTON is Rattus Emeritus of Mousomorphic Literature and of Neo-Ratonic Comparative Philosophy. For the past twenty years, he has been

running *The Rodent's Gazette*, New Mouse City's most widely read daily newspaper.

Stilton was awarded the Ratitzer Prize for his scoops on *The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid* and *The Search for Sunken Treasure*. He has also received the Andersen 2000 Prize for Personality of the Year. One of his bestsellers won the 2002 eBook Award for world's best ratlings' electronic book. His works have been published all over the globe.

In his spare time, Mr. Stilton collects antique cheese rinds and plays golf. But what he most enjoys is telling stories to his nephew Benjamin.





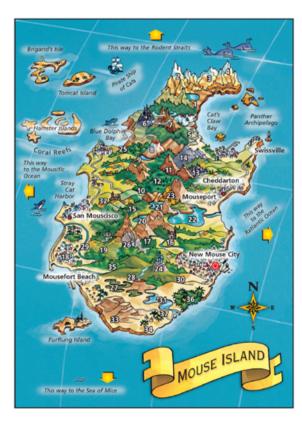
Map of New Mouse City

- Industrial Zone 1.
- 2. Cheese Factories
- 3. Angorat International Airport
- 4. WRAT Radio and Television Station
- 5. Cheese Market
- 6. Fish Market
- 7. Town Hall
- 8. Snotnose Castle
- 9. The Seven Hills of Mouse Island
- Mouse Central Station 10.
- 11. Trade Center
- 12. Movie Theater
- 13. Gym
- 14. Catnegie Hall
- 15. Singing Stone Plaza
- 16. The Gouda Theater
- 17. **Grand Hotel**
- 18. Mouse General Hospital **Botanical Gardens**
- 19. 20. Cheap Junk for Less
- (Trap's store)
- 21. Parking Lot
- 22. Mouseum of Modern Art
- 23. University and Library
- 24. The Daily Rat

- 25. The Rodent's Gazette
- 26. Trap's House

27.

- **Fashion District** 28. The Mouse House
- Restaurant 29 Environmental
- Protection Center Harbor Office 30.
- 31. Mousidon Square
- Garden
- Golf Course 32 33. Swimming Pool
- 34. Blushing Meadow Tennis Courts
- 35. Curlyfur Island Amusement Park
- 36. Geronimo's House
- 37. Historic District
- 38. Public Library
- 39. Shipvard
- 40. Thea's House 41 New Mouse Harbor
- 42. Luna Lighthouse
- 43. The Statue of Liberty
- 44. Hercule Poirat's Office
- 45. Petunia Pretty Paws's House
- Grandfather William's 46. House



Map of Mouse Island

- 1. Big Ice Lake
- 2. Frozen Fur Peak
- 3. Slipperyslopes Glacier
- 4. Coldcreeps Peak
- 5. Ratzikistan
- 6. Transratania
- 7. Mount Vamp
- 8. Roastedrat Volcano
- Brimstone Lake
- 10. Poopedcat Pass
- 11. Stinko Peak
- 12. Dark Forest
- 13. Vain Vampires Valley
- Goose Bumps Gorge
- 15. The Shadow Line Pass
- Penny Pincher Castle
- 17. Nature Reserve Park
- 18. Las Ratayas Marinas
- 19. Fossil Forest
- 20. Lake Lake

- 21. Lake Lakelake
- 22. Lake Lakelakelake
- 23. Cheddar Crag
- 24. Cannycat Castle
- Valley of the Giant Sequoia
- 26. Cheddar Springs
- 27. Sulfurous Swamp
- 28. Old Reliable Geyser
- 29. Vole Vale
- 30. Ravingrat Ravine
- 31. Gnat Marshes
 32. Munster Highland
- Munster Highlands
 Mousehara Desert
- 34. Oasis of the
- Sweaty Camel
 35. Cabbagehead H
- Cabbagehead Hill
 Rattytrap Jungle
- 37. Rio Mosquito





Don't miss any of my other fabumouse adventures!



#1 Lost Treasure



#2 The Curse of the Cheese Pyramid



#3 Cat and Mouse In a Haunted House



#4 I'm Too Fond of My Fur!



#5 Four Mice Deep in the Jungle



#6 Paws Off, Cheddarface!



#7 Red Pizzas for a Blue Count



#8 Attack of the Bandit Cats



#9 A Fabumouse Vacation for Geronimo



#10 All Because of a Cup of Coffee



#11 It's Halloween, You 'Fraidy Mouse!



#12 Merry Christmas, Geronimo!



#13 The Phantom of the Subway



#14 The Temple of the Ruby of Fire



#15 The Mona Mousa Code



#16 A Cheese-Colored Camper



#17 Watch Your Whiskers, Stilton!



#18 Shipwreck on the Pirate Islands



#19 My Name Is Stilton, Geronimo Stilton



#20 Serf's Up, Geronime!



#21 The Wild Wild West



#22 The Secret of Cacklefur Castle



A Christmas Tale



#23 Valentine's Day Disaster



#24 Field Trip to Niagara Falls



#25 The Search for Sunken Treasure



#26 The Mummy with No Name



#27 The Christmas Toy Factory



#28 Wedding Crasher



#29 Down and Out Down Under



#30 The Mouse Island Marathon



#31 The Mysterious Cheese Thief



Christmas Catastrophe



#32 Valley of the Giant Skeletons



#33 Geronimo and the Gold Medal Mystery



#34 Geronimo Stilton, Secret Agent



#35 A Very Merry Christmas



#36 Geronimo's Valentine



#37 The Race Across America



#38 A Fabumouse School Adventure



#39 Singing Sensation



#40 The Karate Mouse



#41 Mighty Mount Kilimanjaro



#42 The Peculiar Pumpkin Thief



#43 I'm Not a Supermouse!



#44 The Giant Diamond Robbery



#45 Save the White Whale!



#46 The Haunted Castle



#47 Run for the Hills, Geronimo!

Be sure to check out these exciting Thea Sisters adventures:



Thea Stillers
DRAGON'S COOL

THEA STILTON AND THE DRAGON'S CODE



THEA STILTON
AND THE
MOUNTAIN OF FIRE







THEA STILTON
AND THE
SECRET CITY



THEA STILTON AND THE MYSTERY IN PARIS



THEA STILTON
AND THE CHERRY
BLOSSOM ADVENTURE



THEA STILTON AND THE STAR CASTAWAYS



THEA STILTON: BIG TROUBLE IN THE BIG APPLE



CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR

I, Seronimo Stillon, have a lot of mouse friends, but none as spooky as my friend CREEPELLA VON CACKLEFUR! She is an enchanting and MYSTERIOUS mouse with a pet bat named Bitewing.

VIKES! I'm a real 'fraidy mouse, but even I think CREEPELLA and her family are CANNEULLY fascinating. I can't wait for you to read all about CREEPELLA in these fa-mouse-ly funny and spectacularly spooky tales!

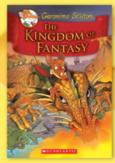






#2 MEET ME IN HORRORWOOD

Don't miss these very special editions!



THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



THE QUEST FOR PARADISE:
THE RETURN TO THE KINGDOM OF FANTASY



VOYAGE:
THE THIRD ADVENTURE
IN THE KINGDOM
OF FANTASY

Dear mouse friends,
Thanks for reading, and farewell
till the next book.

It'll be another whisker-licking-good
adventure, and that's a promise!



Geronimo Stilton

